



Minutes City Council and Tempe Chamber of Commerce Joint Dinner Meeting August 27, 2009

Minutes of the City Council and Tempe Chamber of Commerce Joint Dinner Meeting held on Thursday, August 27, 2009, 6:00 p.m., in the Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Room, 200 East 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Tempe Chamber of Commerce and Council Members Present:

Mayor Hugh Hallman	Marilyn Joyce, Met Life
Councilmember Ben Arredondo	Vicki Kringen, TCH
Councilmember Joel Navarro	David Long, Edward Jones
Councilmember Corey Woods	Stephanie Schaller, SW Airlines
Vice Mayor Shana Ellis	Catherine Mayorga, Tempe Chamber
Councilmember Mark Mitchell	Sandy Catour, Site Wire
Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian	R. J. Orr, Bluemedia
Mary Ann Miller, Tempe Chamber	Bob Normile, CCS-Bridgeview
Carl Streiff, Freescale	Jack Pisano

City Staff Present:

Charlie Meyer, City Mgr	Andrew Ching, City Atty
Jan Hort, City Clerk	Shelly Hearn, Comm Rel
Chris Salomone, Comm Dev	Amber Wakeman, Govt Relations
Mike Branom, Comm Rel	

Mayor Hallman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item 2 – Priorities for the Council

Mayor Hallman opened the meeting by commenting on how the economy has adversely impacted the City budget. As a result, staffing was reduced by 126 positions. The goal of the City Council has been to avoid lay-offs of employees, which has been successful to date. However, because revenues continue to decline to an unanticipated degree, the City Council is now faced with having to trim an additional \$4 million out of this fiscal year's budget. An additional \$4 million will also need to be cut out of the 2010/2011 budget as well. Wage freezes have also been instituted city-wide in addition to some senior level managers voluntarily taking a 2% pay cut.

Aside from the budgetary problems, Council is focused on transitional opportunities between the downtown and town lake. Streetcar, commuter rail and other modes of transit are being discussed so that people that reside in outlying areas such as Maricopa could use this mode of transit to get to downtown Tempe.

Alleys behind residential neighborhood and business communities are another area of study. The goal is to create a master plan to include landscaping and curb appeal that would be applied citywide. This would create a holistic approach to synergize these typically neglected spaces.

Other City Council priorities mentioned were:

- Parks rehabilitation
- Affordable housing
- Creating sustainable city code principals (greener technologies; more permissive)
- Quality of life
- Effective/efficient customer service
- Schools – partnering opportunities
- Youth & amateur sports – recreational tourism
- Valley Metro Rail and regional buses – youth ride free program
- Business friendly City

Agenda Item 3 – Chamber's 2009 Local Position Statements

Vicki Kringen stated that the priorities for the City Council are very similar to the Chamber's priorities. Fortunately, the light rail ridership has exceeded projected expectations. The Orbit compliments the light rail transit option and serves Tempe residents and visitors well. Ms. Miller outlined the Chamber's top four priorities: 1) business relations, 2) economic development, 3) education, and 4) transportation. The Chamber would like to see a conference and convention facility in Tempe. A Tempe school superintendent's business roundtable has proven to be very successful in garnering resources for Tempe schools. Efforts are also underway to work with the Department of Transportation to promote multi-modal transportation options.

Marilyn Joyce stated because of the newly constructed student housing at Arizona State University, there is an excess inventory of vacant homes that students would normally be occupying. Ms. Joyce asked if there was funding available to work with interested landlords that wish to sell their properties. Mayor Hallman responded that the problem is that banks are not loaning money and the pool of qualified buyers has shrunk significantly due to new lending mandates.

Councilmember Mitchell commended the Chamber representatives on their willingness to collaborate with various City Council's over the years, especially during an economic slow down. Vicky Kringen commented that the Chamber is committed to working with residents and the business community to maximize desirable outcomes on issues of concern. Mayor Hallman closed the discussion by asking attendees to keep in mind that when street improvements are made, it must be done with the least amount of adverse impact to the business community.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

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Jan Hort
City Clerk